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# ЖАЖДА АПОКАЛИПТИЧЕСКИХ ВИХРЕЙ И СОЗИДАНИЕ НОВОГО МИРА: РУССКАЯ ЛИТЕРАТУРА XX СТОЛЕТИЯ — ОТ «СЕРЕБРЯНОГО ВЕКА» К ЭСТЕТИКЕ СОВЕТСКИХ ЛЕТ

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**Аннотация:** Статья посвящена влиянию на русскую литературу ключевых исторических факторов XX в. Прежде всего речь идет о художественных контекстах русской революции 1917 г. и дальнейшем формировании советского искусства. Автор показывает, что для многих деятелей русского модернизма ориентация на полный социальный и культурный коллапс была частью эстетической программы. Революция безжалостно откликнулась на этот глубокий внутренний зов русской культуры акцентированной апокалиптикой. Новая советская литература, отрешившись от «буржуазного наследия» «серебряного века», оставалась, однако, глубоко связанной с ее антиутопиями и фобиями, катастрофическими интуициями и чаяниями преображения Человека и Мира. Труд, наука и техника должны были здесь зачастую функционировать как божественные инструменты в эпической песне о рождении Новой Вселенной. Важнейшим этапом в процессе освобождения русской литературы от мифологических построений советской авангардной эстетики стала Вторая мировая война. Она реабилитировала центральный метаобраз русской классики — тему «маленького человека», развенчанного модернизмом.

**Ключевые слова:** русский модернизм, революция, советская культура, мифопоэтика, литература и история.

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# THIRST FOR APOCALYPTIC WHIRLWINDS AND CREATING A NEW WORLD: RUSSIAN LITERATURE OF THE 20TH CENTURY FROM THE SILVER AGE TO THE SOVIET YEARS AESTHETICS

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**Abstract:** In the article, specific attention is paid to the factors that define the development of Russian literature at the most critical stages of the previous century. Especially, it dwells on the Russian revolution of 1917 and its most immediate consequence: creating Soviet Art. The author demonstrates that for many figures of Russian Modernism an orientation towards total social and cultural collapse was part of their aesthetic program. The Revolution mercilessly responded to this deep inner call of Russian culture. The response was received by the public in the shadow of the last book in the Bible: the Apocalypse. New Soviet literature, separated from the “bourgeois heritage” of the Silver Age, however, was deeply connected with its dystopias and phobias, catastrophic intuition and the expectation of the transformation of a Man and World where labor, science and technique should function as divine tools in the Epic Song of the Birth of New Universe. The most important stage in the process of the liberation of Russian literature from mythological constructions of Soviet avant-garde aesthetics was the Second World War. It rehabilitated a central meta-hero of great Russian classical literature, “a little person” debunked by Modernism.

**Keywords:** Russian Modernism, Revolution, Soviet Culture, Mythopoetics, Literature and History.

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In this article, specific attention is paid to the factors that define the development of Russian literature at the most critical stages of the previous century. In particular, it will dwell on its first decades and the central historical event during this time, not only in Russian, but in World history, the Russian revolution of 1917. Recently, we have celebrated the centenary of this date and now we are passing the 100th anniversary of its most immediate consequence: the USSR formation. However, two important prerequisites should be introduced before the main point is discussed.

The first one requires to recall a popular paradox: Russia is a country with an unpredictable past. Behind this paradox, there is a peculiar feature of Russian history, which is based on crashes and breaks brought on by revolutions, but not evolution. It constantly occurs after one painful period of national history and then there is another time, which makes question and reevaluate the previous epoch and its values, judging it in a series of severely cruel courts. In Russian history of the 20th century, there are two catastrophic crashes: the Revolution of 1917 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. After each of these crashes, culture revised and refined the essence of the previous period. Often, it strongly renounces the previous stage of history. But the paradox states that even by renouncing the essence of the previous period, a new or / and reborn culture still preserves the complicated connection with the past.

The second prerequisite is the so-called centralized literary character of Russian culture. Literature plays a central role as an institution in Russian social life and functions differently in comparison to its role in other countries. Russian literature appears not only as a main type of art, but also as a political platform for philosophical and religious reflections as well as enunciating public opinion.

Thus, we can generalize. Russian history of the 20th century is catastrophic. Furthermore, Russian literature responds to the catastrophe in the most significant way.

In general, the Silver Age of Russian literature is the epoch of denial of positivism and materialism in the use of idealism, metaphysics, the search of religious synthesis, sophisticated aestheticism, elegant decadence, frantic spiritual unrest and an intense interest in exoticism. This was the time of Modernist art and Symbolism; the dichotomous period of disease and glorious intrigue. At the same time, this is a period of mass rebellion and an influx of low-society members being included in the literary process as depicted subjects and studied themes. It is no coincidence that between the heroes of the Silver Age are, for example, the "bare-footed beggar," as depicted in Gorky's works, panhandlers, paupers, outcasts and homeless "untouchables," who use their own trenchant language to transfer elegant and decadent philosophical ideas of Friedrich Nietzsche [1; 10].

The distinctive features of the Silver Age in Russia can be seen with particular clarity in comparison with the "period of the Modern" and its place in the annals of Western culture. It is only natural that a certain degree of inconsistency in juxtaposing the universal and the uniquely national in historiography is inevitable. However, in the case of Russian literature, this inevitability would probably be raised to the power of three, for obvious reasons. In the first place, this is due to the range of problems inevitably arising from Russia-Europe relationship, such as their strategic unity and common genesis combined with tactical differences, so to speak, of these two civilizational systems.

In the second place, there are some more concrete reasons, closely connected with literature proper. As distinct from Europe and other Western and Eastern regions, in Russia the period under consideration was not just a landmark of an important time of change on the axiological scale of art, brought about by the crisis in the canon and fundamental principles of classical aesthetics. Because of the Russian Revolution of 1917 this period saw the downfall of a whole civilizational model ("historical Russia") and its complete replacement with a new model in principle. And whereas Russian culture is traditionally distinguished by literary centrism, the apparently purely literary concepts, within the space of their radiating influence on the "eschatology of the Russian cosmos," are endowed with additional historiosophic, if not religious, value-overloaded semantics. In addition to the above: the period at the turn of the 20th century takes a special

place in the history of Russian literature, and we would hardly be able to find analogous phenomena in the Western literatures of the period. The thing is not how powerful was the phenomenon of Russian Symbolism, it is more significant that already from the 1910s the period of the turn of the 20th century in Russia began to be viewed as the climax of national cultural development, as a period of the maximum flourishing ("renaissance," etc.) of the Russian creative potential. The complexity of the situation consists in the fact that the literature of the turn of the 20th century, while assuming the role of the highest stage in the dynamics of Russian culture, was also developing a metalanguage for interpreting this dynamics as well, thus establishing the hierarchy of values and the canon for national achievements; moreover, it was evaluating the "Golden" period of Pushkin and Gogol according to the Silver-Age templates, which still largely determine our views of the early 20th century literature to this day. In this way the Golden Age was absorbed, so to speak, by the Silver Age and, willy-nilly, had to pass on to the latter the function of the canon-setting metatext of culture much in the same way as half a millennium earlier the "text of Antiquity" passed on a similar role to the Italian Renaissance humanism.

However, the Russian Silver Age performed this operation not only on Russia's past but in many ways in regard to the entire preceding world culture. This is due to its specific nature. Typologically, the turn of the 20th century in Russia can be placed in the category of those epochs in the history of world literature, which famous Russian academician and orientalist Nikolay Konrad called "extreme" or "transitional," maintaining that one of their main distinguishing features is the tendency towards a "return movement" of culture to its roots [5, p. 483].

These "later," borderline cultures and literatures bear a certain summary quality in relation to the entire previous tradition. They accumulate the meanings, artistic solutions, aesthetic models, motives and images inherited from all the preceding centuries. They become veritable encyclopedias of the entire variety of works written and digested in the course of the previous centuries. This heritage, extended in time, accumulates in one spot and arranges itself into a single mosaic. The different periods of the past coexist in the present appearing as an eternal reality. The present systematizes and re-arranges them, and out of these texts from bygone cultures it draws a new design on the surface of the present day, thus connecting it as it were to a timeless space of eternal meanings. This threshold-period literature, which is inevitably infected with aesthetic decadence, while at the same

time providing possibilities for new breakthroughs, adapts various cultural dialects and thus forms a universal, synthetic language: rich, refined, sophisticated, expressive and eloquent. Having been thoroughly digested this language becomes a lingua franca incorporating the entire preceding culture of many ages, an "introduction to the grammar" of literary tradition, a situation which presupposes development of new methods of historiographic fixation of this tradition with a claim to universality.

The above does not simply characterizes the Russian literary Silver Age, these features transpire in it with particular clarity and fullness. Due to the same factors, the Silver Age has largely rewritten the history of the preceding Russian and world literatures and thus occupied its rightful place in the historical perspective along the lines which were especially close to the Kulturträger, or great figures of culture, of the turn of the 20$^{th}$ century. It turned out that thanks to their influence on the language of the literary history and theory of the following decades, the literary figures of the Silver Age partly absorbed not only the past but also the future, and that was an important result of the situation described above.

Typologically, in the history of Russian national culture the Silver Age has probably played the same system-forming role as the Elizabethan epoch had played for England, the Renaissance for Italy, Classicism and the Enlightenment for France, and Romanticism for Germany. There is one important distinction though. In none of these countries of major old European cultures the period of the highest prosperity happened to coincide with a historical catastrophe, a collapse of the entire existential-axiological paradigm (See also: [7, p. 10–19; 8; 12; 13]).

Moreover, for many figures of Russian Modernism[1] an orientation towards this sort of collapse was part of their aesthetic program and constituted a component of their value field as one of the meaning-generating constants. Without regard for this "passionate thirst" for apocalyptic whirlwinds, almost to the point of suicidal itch, it is impossible to understand either the Russian infatuation with Nietzschean ideas or the political openness of the poets Aleksandr Blok and Andrey Bely towards revelations of the Bolsheviks, or the very nature of the Russian revolutionary avant-garde art as such.

"Rus disappeared in two days," Vasiliy Rozanov wrote about the Russian revolution of 1917 [17, p. 55]. Russian writers offered various key met-

1 For the latest approaches to Russian modernism "as an evolving system of values, ideas, practices, and conventions", see: [11].

aphors to distinguish the meaning of this historical cataclysm. Alexander Block and Boris Pilnyak, a wonderful novelist of early Soviet years, called the revolution, "forces of nature" and "blizzard." Another key Soviet prose writer, Leonid Leonov, called it "the great break." Boris Pasternak offered another variation, "the great social surgery." In the essence, these metaphors[2] show the total crash of the great humanitarian paradigm of the Russian culture, which was brought up in the parks and estates of European cultural environments and started at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries by Peter the Great. Inside this paradigm, however, existed the inevitable doom of failure. One of the key reasons for this was the tragic gap between the "Intelligentsia" and the rest of the population of Russia.

The "crash of two days" was not accidental. Russian humanitarian culture was the victim of the revolution, but during the entire period of its blossoming, the culture was expecting catastrophe and therefore fed into its potential. Russian culture experienced the inner desire of social suicide or it could be argued that instead, the culture was paralyzed by its own destructive inevitability. Lydia Ginzburg illustrated these ideas in the following way: "Many big names in Russian culture did not want revolution and therefore ridiculed it. However, disagreement with the existing order of things was their lifestyle and the shared experience of all Russian culture. All thinking people were against this or that, including Slavophiles, Dostoevsky and Vladimir Soloviev... Educated Russians found the complex of dissent in themselves just ready, together with the first glimpses of consciousness, as an immutable reality and value" [15, p. 314].

In pre-revolutionary decades, these processes achieved their climax. The myth of a New Man was the main argument of the heritage of Marxists, Christian socialists, symbolists and the writers of all styles and groups. It means that this myth was the foundation of artistic and philosophical grammar of the "Silver Age." The epoch was ill with the desire of total world transformation, the elimination of the "Old Man" (symbolic Old Testament Man) and the creation and idolization (even divinization) of a "Titan Man."

Friedrich Nietzsche said, "Man is something that shall be overcome" [16, p. 27]. These words in the forefront of Russian culture were transformed into the feeling of total world catastrophe and that the world shall be overcome. In contrast

2 For the taxonomy of these metaphors and their context, see: [2, p. 21–41].

to European modernism, with its concentration on individuality, Russian modernism operated with historisophical categories and created its own language of religious-mythological description of the world, in which modern dramas acquired a status of eternal mystery. The growth of the social revolution was perceived by the public as a harbinger of radical revolution of the spirit, signifying the “end of the ages.” The creators’ perspectives of new culture were focused on the “aftermath” of the coming catastrophe. The writers and artists felt the inevitability of the catastrophe on a physical level. This is the source of intense wanting for the future and subsequently birthed the trends of dystopian projects, which were raised by strong eschatological emotions. The association with total and complete finality, the end of the previous period of national history, and history of mankind as a whole, permeated the creativity of essentially all significant writers and thinkers.

The revolution of 1917 mercilessly responded to this deep inner call of Russian culture. The response was received by the public in the shadow of the last book in the Bible, which described the end of the world in detail: the Apocalypse (See also: [6; 9]). The translation of discourse in religious and sacred register is the most important mechanism used by the Atheist revolutionary era in Russia. In the leftist, radical culture of the time, the revolution was understood as a transformation of the entire universe, which was newly created, according to the Bible. The Bible was historically addressed by Soviet culture polemically, starting with Block’s poem, “Twelve” [4, p. 97].

Apocalyptic emotions penetrated the body of “Silver Age” culture in such a way, causing an ironic aversion among the artists of modernism. For example, Andrey Beliy tells the story of how Maximilian Voloshin visits Paris and “takes off his top-hat whilst among acquaintances and from his carriage announces, ‘Have you heard the latest news? The end of the world is in Moscow’ ” [14, p. 229]. In everyday culture, the most eccentric writers and politicians were given the role of “Satan” out of public habit (Mayakovsky, Lenin, Trotsky as “predecessors” of the “Antichrist,” etc.).

The feeling of the end of the world became more pronounced with the idea of inevitable retribution on the higher culture and its population on behalf of the masses. In the articles by Vyacheslav Ivanov, Block, Beliy and Merezhkovsky, we are introduced to a paradox of coexistence of absolutism of culture and the societal desire to relinquish from it. As a consequence of this, writers and intellectuals, in good conscience, admit their own failure of indecisiveness. These emotions

were omnipresent in the years before the revolution and in many ways, defined the culture of Soviet Russia.

After 1917, new Soviet literature separated itself from the "bourgeois heritage" of the Silver Age. By the essence, however, it was deeply connected with dystopias and phobias, catastrophic intuition and the expectation of the transforming of the Man and the World.

Many early Soviet experiences were informed by the expectations of the transformation previously mentioned. These experiences include: the creation of a titanic culture in the new world, a cult of self-construction, particularly in "constructivism," the aestheticization of "machines" and the artificial formation of a person, the giant collective of a "super-ego" in Mayakovsky's works, in the works of the group of proletarian poets called "Smiths" and in the works of early Soviet avant-gard artists in general (from Alexei Gastev to Fyodor Gladkov). Their creations often showed off their Atheist values and at the same time, hosted many biblical allusions. The artists demonstrated their opposition to the past in their work and at the same time, successfully synthesized the heritage of the culture from before the revolution.

Originally, early Soviet literature had, in fact, denied religion. However, from the beginning, the transformation of chaos into cosmos cultivated the myth of creation of new world. Within this myth, it is said that labor, science and technique functioned as divine tools in the Epic Song of the Birth of New Universe. This was done using avant-garde aesthetics, which amazed both East and West, completely changing world literature. It is because of this that the novel, "Cement," written by Fiodor Gladkov and published in 1925, was the first sample of the new canon (referred to as the method of "Social Realism"). This novel influenced the new direction of avant-garde, constructivist novels, which were highly influential in Western literatures. At the same time, early Soviet literature born from revolutionary experiences, the First World War, as well as the Civil War, paved the way for a new type of book. The books of this specific style can be called "mosaic", "kaleidoscope", or "collage." They have become a form of transmitting a tragic semantic fracture, a concussion of the human spirit caused by a historical cataclysm. The so called "ornamental prose" appeared in Soviet Russia in the 1920s. It has played an important role in the creation of a novel-collage in the literature of Western countries, specifically "in between two wars" era. Needless to say, perhaps there was not a time where Russian literary texts were so quickly

and widely spread, translated into various other languages and welcomed abroad by so many, as the texts were under the first decades of Soviet leadership.

Certainly, the enthusiasm of revolutionary and worldly creations was inseparable from the fervor of liberation.

Within Soviet literature, it is not only social liberation that remains prominent, but rather liberation from cultural tradition, which leads to highly anticipated change (tragic but sometimes fruitful) of the cultural code.

This process was mostly visible in the activity of the younger generation of first Soviet writers, who became literary relevant due to the Revolution, but with the cost of Civil War.

Their role is unique. In fact, they took over the "recreation of literature" with absolute ontological freedom from cultural tradition with its longstanding and necessary hierarchy. These young writers could be compared with the Biblical Adam, who gave names to all "things." However, instead of these "things" being named in the newly created world depicted in the first chapters of the book of Genesis, they are the "things" that exist in the post-Apocalyptic world.

Immediately following the Revolution, publishing came to a complete halt as the business crumbled under the unprecedented and devastating aftermath. Consequently, literature within the public sphere temporarily stopped. Carriers of the old, pre-revolutionary culture emigrated abroad in large numbers and they continued the line of succession to Russian classical literature while remaining in exile.

Young Soviet novelists renewed the interrupted literary process in their own country, when it became possible. This literature revival gave this generation a unique legacy and allotted contemporaries the chance to watch the rebirth of art, or its "Renaissance" if we interpret the word to mean a "New Birth." The authors who started writing in Soviet Russia after the Revolution rediscovered the business of literature. This is the generation of Boris Pilnyak, Artiom Vesioly, Yury Olesha, Mikhail Zoshchenko, Konstantin Fedin, Vsevolod Ivanov, Mikhail Sholokhov, and Andrey Platonov. Renowned critic, Andrey Levinson once spoke of this generation by stating, "No culture but the abyss of curiosity" [18]. Their ancestors had been living in a 100 year-old tradition and had been slowly "digesting" the cultural heritage. For newly arrived writers, the continuity fell apart. Everything had to be redone and nothing was absolute. Immediately, this generation produced a wonderful school of literary criticism ("Russian Formalism"), which

essentially changed "the landscape" of world humanities knowledge as we knew it to be. Specifically, its ideologists, such as Shklovsky, Eikhenbaum and Tynyanov. "They questioned the basic principle of the narrative form. Style, composition, vocabulary and syntax — everything had to be revised and reevaluated. There was so much passion for the different theories that it seemed as though the search for a literary device was the same as the search for the holy grail" [18].

Liberation from culture as a strict hierarchical system and altar before which people reverently kneel, led many young Soviet writers to be bold and daring, releasing them from repressive rules and allowing them to improvise, manipulate and experiment with their perception of Russian classical literature. It was a new type of "barbarism" combined with inquisitiveness and readiness to accept the unknown. The previous tradition was transformed in an individualized way and the search for new orientation marks opened. Within their national heritage, they did not adapt to the classical line that ran from Pushkin through Tolstoy towards Chekov, but rather they adjusted the line of romanticism leading from Gogol through Dostoevsky to Andrey Beliy. They preferred visionaries to descriptors. Insatiable, they "gutted" Leskov, dug into Ernst Theodor Hoffmann, dissected the works of Dickens, exhumed Laurence Stern, all while decorating their own prose exercises with the riches and trophies. At the same time they aimed the great goal of giving (avant-garde) form and sense to what they saw and overcame during this "great storm." The spirit of both chaos and confusion of cataclysm filled and consumed their first books. Collapse, rebellion, retreat, Civil War, the epic brutality of internecine warfare, the mixing of races, migration of peoples, famine, terror, caravans and Exodus, desert and ruins, spark of enthusiasm and hatred, heroism and betrayal in the decorations of agonizing cities, besotted villages and mysterious steppes, among storms of drifting snow and flood stages; these were the main motifs of prose written by Boris Pilnyak, Vsevolod Ivanov, Isaak Babel. In their works, the genius of termination was rattling. Later there was a period of silence in the background of this grandiose fresco that shaped the main character of Russian literature, which started showing itself in the works of significant representatives of the first generation of Soviet writers, first of all in the works of Andrey Platonov and Mikhail Sholokhov. This main character of Russian literature is "a little person," who faced the history and new world with great trepidation and horror.

As for the "old" intelligentsia who succeeded pre-revolutionary Russia, they inevitably faced the dramatic alternative question of whether or not they

should accept the affront, remain nostalgic, begin a mission of preserving tradition or throw off "the load" of former humanistic culture. If Russian writers chose the last option, there were two methods to go about this new development.

The first method was the synthesis of archaic ideas and futurism during the process in the creation of new myths, where former constructions of Modernistic aesthetics were subordinated to the avant-garde goal of the creation of Soviet cosmos. This is the case of Vyacheslav Ivanov, a poet and a guru of the Russian Symbolist movement. Ivanov tried to implement Dionysus Greek orgy myth into the collective literary spirit of the Revolution and Communist building. In 1919 in one of his articles he remarked that his revolutionary model "cleared away" humanism and individualism with "mystical socialization of conscience." Ivanov's ideas of philosophy of culture paved the way for early Soviet parades and shows. Ivanov, a herald of Symbolism, interpreted Soviet parades and shows as the newest embodiment of the ancient Greek "choral Orchestra" and "Dionysus actions" [3].

The second method of development may be defined with the help of the Greek notion of *kenosis* (κένωσις), which in Russian context meant consciously "self-emptying" your own will. It can additionally be described as belittling oneself for the sake of overcoming the schism between the intelligentsia and the mass of population during the revolution years. It was a new form of an old tradition of "the veneration to common folk," which was spread among educated social strata in Russian. This brought hundreds of intelligentsia representatives to the studio of Proletcult aiming to make the proletarian masses co-creators of new Soviet culture. The advantages included sacrificial dedication to the members of the organization and widespread, enlightening work. The disadvantages, however, were the social and cultural "barbarization" of the country's life and obligatory ideological pressure, which forced people to either achieve tragic compromise or surrender their own ethics.

In truth, another method existed among these two. It was remaining faithful to classical tradition. The followers of this method existed not only abroad, but within Russia as well. By analyzing a wide registry of Russian texts written in the 20th century, acknowledged as Soviet masterpieces, we will see that the majority of them resisted the avant-garde mainstream ideas of dehumanization and total liberation from traditional values in one way or another. Avant-garde literature

already began losing its lively, creative essence in 1930s. This type of literature turned into the bronze monument itself, forming a tough didactic, based on the cliché aesthetic of Sosialistic Canon and strangling the creative process by its "steel ideological pincers." This Canon had ruled official Soviet culture until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. In the six decades leading up to this event, this Canon caused a growing wave of resistance among creative people. Almost all the truly "big literature" written during the Soviet years, within the "new world," which overshadowed previous values, showed faithfulness to the high humanistic and spiritual traditions of Russian classical literature.

Yet in the novel "Master and Margarita," all every day Soviet life, filtered by spectacular phantasmagoria, was exposed by the metaphysical court. The most important stage in the process of the liberation of Russian literature from mythological constructions of Soviet aesthetics was the Second World War. The penetrating and overwhelming experience of collective grief released veterans of their belief and reliance on myths, which neglected to touch on the every day life of "a little person." With the help of Mikail Sholokov, the author of the novel "The Fate of a Man," and Tvardovsky, the author of the poem "Vasiliy Tyorkin," and many other big writers, post-war masterpieces has rehabilitated the central subject of great Russian classical literature mentioned before, and included the topic of "a little person," mentioning his hardships and higher calling, his role as God's creature and his life as a unique and valued member of this world.

Famous Russian writers of the 20th century were able to dislike, oppose and even disparage each other using professional and ideological motifs. This kind of relationship was evident, for instance, between Sholokhov and Solzhenitsyn, two Nobel Prize-winning Russian authors. For Sholokhov who was a person of socialistic ideals, Solzhenitsyn, the author of "The Gulag Archipelago," was an anti-Soviet writer who wrote about Soviet reality in the style of slanderous attacks. Solzhenitsyn was the first person who publicly denied the idea that Sholokhov was the author of the novel "And Quiet Flows the Don" which is the great epic fresco of the Russian revolution. However, in the sense of culture, they are "brothers" and equally served the idea to restore the rights of humanistic heritage of Pushkin and Gogol, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. In his novels "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" and "Matryona's Place," Solzhenitsyn protected "a little person," the main character of Russian classical literature, in the same way as Sholokhov did in his novels, "And Quiet Flows the Don" and "The Fate of a Man."

This thesis could be endlessly developed on the material of other topics of Russian classical literature using different aspects of its art system. However, that is a conversation for the future.

Let us return to the indication of discontinuity in the development of Russian history in general and in the history of Russian culture in particular, as well as the special importance of its fractures and raptures. As we saw, the real history of literature corrects the logic of life. It is dialectically developed. Fractures and raptures in the history of Russian literature not only release old methods, but also gift new things and provide us with the opportunity to feel the viability of universal phenomenon of experiencing "the eternal return" of classical culture. This is the true experience of all Russian literature in the 20th century.

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